

## Chapter 2: Recruiting SROs

A program's first step after signing a memorandum of understanding or contract between the law enforcement agency and school district is to recruit candidates for the SRO position(s).

### Approaches to Recruitment

Different law enforcement agencies in the study have used different approaches to recruiting candidates, but three principal guidelines stand out:

- (1) Do not assign officers involuntarily to be SROs; instead, ***solicit volunteers*** for the position.
- (2) Choose approaches for posting the assignment carefully, generally ***using more than one method***.
- (3) ***Provide information*** about the position and screening process ***with the posting***.

### Make the Position Voluntary

Not all patrol officers and road deputies can be effective as SROs because programs have found that officers working in the schools need a number of skills and personality characteristics that are very different than those required for patrol duty (chapter 3, "Screening SROs," identifies the abilities and personality traits that SROs need). As a result, programs that have assigned officers to be SROs involuntarily have typically found that, although a few officers assigned to the position grow to enjoy and become good at it, most of them do a poor job because they do not have the ability or desire for the position. By contrast, programs report that ***allowing officers to volunteer to serve as SROs results in a higher level of commitment to the position***. As John Morella, an SRO in West Orange, New Jersey, said, "It should be a volunteer position—the officers should want to be there [in the schools]."

### Choose Posting Options Carefully—and Use More Than One Approach

The programs studied for this report use one or more of six methods for recruiting candidates:

- e-mail;
- mailboxes;
- roll call;
- bulletin boards;
- open houses and trainings; and
- personal invitations.

Each of these approaches has its advantages and disadvantages, but obviously departments should choose the methods that are most likely to reach all eligible officers in their particular agencies.

### *E-Mail*

When officers have in-cruiser computers, sending an e-mail can reach every patrol officer. For example, the Delaware State Police (as it does for all new positions for which it is recruiting internally) e-mails a position announcement prepared by the SRO program's administrative sergeant to every trooper's in-car laptop computer. The Garner, North Carolina, Police Department also e-mails the entire department. However, e-mail is effective only if it is the primary method of communication within the department. For example, because patrol officers in one department have access to e-mail only at the station house, they seldom read their e-mails. As a result, the department relies on other methods of notifying officers when an SRO position opens up.

### *Mailboxes*

Mailboxes are often the most effective approach in departments that distribute paychecks and important agency news that way. The Lakewood, Colorado, Police Department distributes an official hard-copy memo to supervisors and officers when it is seeking an SRO for a specific school assignment.

### *Roll Call*

A significant benefit to announcing position openings at roll call is that current SROs or program supervisors can make informal brief presentations describing the program and then answer questions. However, ***departments should not rely exclusively on roll calls to recruit for the program.***

- There is often limited time at roll call to ask questions. In addition, according to one program supervisor, "During roll call, the information is buried with other announcements and gets lost." Furthermore, according to Sergeant William "Joe" Cline, a supervisor of the Chula Vista program, "Many officers will be hesitant to ask about the program for fear that other officers will kid them for expressing interest about becoming 'Kiddie Cops'—there is no privacy at roll call. However, I'm hopeful that this sentiment will continue to diminish as everyone continues to recognize the huge benefits the program has proven to be for our communities and the kids."
- Some officers may miss the announcement because they are sick, at training, in court, or on vacation at the time the opening is announced.

---

### *Bulletin Boards*

Because many departments advertise all new positions on their internal bulletin boards, their personnel regularly scan everything that is posted there. As a result, although the Tucson, Arizona, program e-mails notices of openings, bulletin board postings are more effective because it is easier for officers to walk by and take a look at them than to get on the computer and take the time to find the job openings website.

### *Open Houses and Trainings*

One program conducts an open house during different times of the year and arranges for school officials, as well as SROs, to explain to interested officers the nature of the SRO position and its importance to the agency, school, and local community. Agencies can also take advantage of times when patrol and other officers are a "captive audience" to promote the program.

- Programs can arrange to have a separate block of instruction during the entry-level police academy training on the SRO position and its importance.
- Agencies can set aside an hour during annual in-service training to describe the program—including inviting an enthusiastic SRO to discuss why he or she finds the position so rewarding and to answer questions.
- Captain Curtis Main of the Boone, North Carolina, Police Department changed the agency's field training officer program so that all new recruits spend 2 weeks of the 14-week program shadowing the SRO in the high school.

### *Personal Invitations to Apply*

Some programs invite specific officers or deputies who are thought to be appropriate for the position to apply.

- Supervisors in the Sarasota County, Florida, program use personal relationships to actively recruit candidates who they think might be good SROs because the supervisors feel the officers have the right personality or because they know the officers have children at home or are involved in youth activities.
- In Salem, New Hampshire, SRO Steve Malisos reported that "Kevin Nolan [the first SRO] recruited me. He said, 'Would you be interested?' I had been on patrol for 10 years, and Kevin had a hunch that I was ready to make a change [and felt sure Malisos would be the right person for the job]."

- The program supervisor in Jefferson City, Missouri, meets informally with carefully selected officers in hallways or luncheonettes to encourage them to apply, asking, "Have you ever thought about coming to our unit? If so, are you interested in working with our youth?"
- In Lakewood, Colorado, Sergeant Patricia Heffner asks the SROs to suggest other officers who might be good for the position and then invites them to apply.
- Captain Curtis Main reviews the daily logs maintained by trainees during the field training block when new recruits shadow an SRO (see above) to identify rookies who might be interested in and appropriate for the position in the future.

The Whittier, California, Police Department, started its recruitment efforts for its program with officers who were already providing school security either by moonlighting as security guards or working overtime for the police department through a contract with the schools. Similarly, some program supervisors ask their Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) officers, who are already teaching in the schools, if they would like to apply.

In contrast, Sergeant Jerry Thommes, the police supervisor of the Schaumburg, Illinois, program, deliberately does not invite particular officers to apply because he feels that could discourage other candidates who may feel they are at a disadvantage. ***To avoid the perception and reality of being unfair, programs should not rely on personal invitations as their only recruitment approach.*** While many very small departments understandably rely heavily on word of mouth to advertise, in addition to being unreliable the approach can result in some officers deciding that the selection process was unfair.

In a variation of the personal invitation approach, some departments contact officers who applied for the position previously but, although qualified, were not selected (see the box "Keep a Pool of Qualified Candidates").

### **Keep a Pool of Qualified Candidates**

A few programs keep a list of candidates who, after screening for a previous SRO opening, were found to be qualified but were not selected. When positions open up again, program supervisors contact these officers to encourage them to reapply.

- The Schaumburg Police Department keeps screened and eligible candidates who were not selected in an eligibility pool for six months.
- Candidates for SRO positions in the Garner, North Carolina, Police Department who qualified but were not selected are placed on an eligibility list for the following year and given first choice if a position opens up.

Some departments help rejected but qualified candidates prepare for the next cycle of applications.

- The program coordinator in Lakewood asks the supervisors of candidates who are ineligible because they do not have sufficient experience on the force to permit the officers to observe an SRO in the schools so they can decide whether to reapply in the future and, if so, to have a better idea about how to be successful candidates.
- For qualified applicants who were not selected, Captain Curtis Main of the Boone, North Carolina, Police Department organizes training on topics such as crime prevention. He also arranges for them to work ball games or other extracurricular events so they have a better feel for the job, will be more desirable candidates in the future, and will be better prepared, if they get the assignment, for going into the schools.
- The Garner Police Department's program provides candidates who qualify as SROs, but were outscored by other applicants, with their final screening results, as well as an analysis of their performance and strategies, so they can improve their scores if they reapply.

### *Using Multiple Approaches*

In general, except in very small departments, ***using more than one recruitment approach is most likely to ensure that all potential candidates learn about the opportunity to apply.*** For example, the Chula Vista program supervisors announce each opening through e-mail and hard copy in every eligible officer's mailbox, and they also ask patrol sergeants to read and distribute copies of the announcement at roll calls. The West Orange Police Department announces openings using mailboxes and line-ups; the Oklahoma County Sheriff's Office uses bulletin boards and line-ups; and the Fontana, California, Police Department relies on bulletin boards and e-mails.

### **Provide Information With the Posting**

To reduce the number of inappropriate candidates, position announcements should:

- provide basic eligibility criteria (see chapter 3, "Screening SROs");
- describe the screening process applicants will have to undergo; and
- identify important features of the job (e.g., teaching, after-hours work).

For example, the Garner Police Department posting lists the following requirements for the position:

- two years of service;
- no disciplinary actions in the past 12 months before applying;
- above average score on the department's previous performance review;
- a certain number of training points (e.g., 1 point for public speaking, 1 point for health and wellness activities, 3 points for community policing); and
- one self-study research project of at least 30 hours completed.

The Schaumburg Police Department's announcement identifies 14 responsibilities officers will be expected to fulfill, beginning not with law enforcement but with education, such as "Teach lessons in gang/violence resistance and drug and alcohol resistance to all Junior High students." The Chula Vista position announcement makes clear that applicants need to be willing to "[p]rovide gang awareness training to upper grades and 911 training to lower grades, as well as possess, among other skills:

- ability to prioritize workload,
- ability to interact with school officials, and
- knowledge of mentoring principles.

---

## Incentives

There are two types of incentives for becoming an SRO: those that are inherent in the position and those that the law enforcement agency can offer to "sweeten the pot."

### Publicize the Incentives Provided by the Nature of the Position

SROs and supervisors report there are four features of being an SRO that are particularly attractive to some officers.

- (1) ***Having weekends and holidays off, and working only days.*** According to one SRO, "So many officers applied [in his department] because it is an opportunity to get away from rotating shifts and to get on the day shift permanently." In the Palm Beach School District Police Department, "A major incentive to recruitment is the reduced duty year SROs have [compared with other officers]—only 202 work days," according to chief James Kelly.
- (2) ***Working with kids.*** Time and again, SROs report they always wanted to work with kids as the major reason they sought the position.
- (3) ***Being able to make a difference in the lives of kids*** by helping them to stay out of trouble or turn their lives around. SRO José Cuellar with the Palm Beach County, Florida, School District Police Department said, "I've always been interested in working with kids because of the opportunity to save some along the way. On the street, it's a revolving door—the same drunks and prostitutes. In school, you can save a few kids. At the first graduation I went to as an SRO, three kids who'd I'd arrested thanked me for helping them out."
- (4) ***Being independent,*** free from excessively close supervision. For James Wilkerson, an SRO with the Palm Beach County program, "One of the biggest advantages of the position is not being micromanaged—you're left alone but not abandoned."

Several other features of the SRO position also motivate some officers to apply for the position.

- (1) ***Receiving constant reinforcement from many administrators and faculty*** who, as one SRO supervisor said, "roll out the red carpet for the officers in terms of welcoming them warmly."



- (2) **Experiencing new and challenging work.** "Patrol officers are locked into a beat and radio; SROs have more flexibility and can be more creative," one supervisor said.
- (3) **Handling cases from start to finish.** According to SRO Steve Malisos in Salem, "Unlike a patrolman, you get to follow up on every case. When I heard that there were kids in the [school] building who were producing and selling fake New Hampshire driver licenses, I found the suspects, drew up search warrants for their homes, seized a computer in their houses, and testified in court."
- (4) **Gaining opportunities for extra training.** Some officers are attracted to the extra training SROs receive in many departments—for example, the Scottsdale, Arizona, Police Department provides training to its SROs beyond what a patrol officer would receive because they need to be able to conduct investigations from start to finish on their own. When recruiting for SRO positions, the department's program supervisor said he highlights the fact that SROs receive more training than any other assignment in the department because other positions are more specialized and the training, therefore, is more targeted.
- (5) **Becoming detectives.** In some departments, officers automatically become detectives in the agencies' juvenile bureau when they become SROs. "Some officers," Detective John Jameson, a former Schaumburg SRO, reported, "like detective status."
- (6) **Gaining an advantage in getting promoted.**
  - According to Jim Marshall, the only SRO in the Marshall, Minnesota, Police Department, "Being an SRO can be a positive for promotion because it shows how you can implement programs on your own and not be supervised every day. This is also a high visibility position with the media and parents—so you're on the chief's radar. I thought about all this before I applied for the position and felt it would help my career."
  - According to SRO Steve Malisos, "As a means of career advancement, some officers want to experience working in several positions in the department. In addition, it can help you because you have to multi-task and wear lots of hats. So you can show people [in the department] you have different abilities. You develop skills in community relations, public speaking with PTAs and in the classroom, giving advice to principals, and dealing with every crime here that you see on the street—assault, theft, drugs, alcohol."



## The Fontana, California, Program Builds a Better Mousetrap

Fontana's program supervisor, along with several SROs, believe that the well-run nature of the program, the respect it is accorded in the schools and the community, and its multiple local and national awards for excellence are the best incentives for attracting candidates—an example of the cliché, "build a better mousetrap and people will beat a path to your door." As a command staff person said, "If we do an excellent job and make sure people know about it, everything else [recruitment and funding] will take care of itself."

Departments are likely to attract more candidates to the positions ***if they describe these benefits to becoming an SRO in their postings***. For example, in order to attract candidates, the Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Police Department's posting of the position (see the appendix) notes that the position offers:

- daytime hours;
- weekends and holidays off;
- bidding the patrol shift SROs want to work during the summer;
- training opportunities;
- working in an environment in which they are welcomed and held in high esteem;
- working independently;
- being proactive; and
- investigating and following through with cases the same way a detective does.

### Consider Offering Additional Incentives

In some departments, few officers have responded to postings. No one at all volunteered for the position in one small program. In another jurisdiction, the number of candidates declined from 18 to 4 after patrol officers saw that SROs were required to teach and work one-on-one with students. As a result, while not a common practice,<sup>2</sup> a few of the 34 programs in the study provide additional incentives to attract applicants.

- (1) **Take-home cruisers.** In the Tucson Police Department, only SROs get to take their cruisers home every night. Although all deputies in the Sarasota County Sheriff's Office have take-home cruisers, SROs get an unmarked take-home car. The experience of the Scottsdale Police Department suggests the motivating power of offering take-home cruisers: when the agency stopped the practice, it noticed a decline in the number of officers applying for SRO vacancies.

---

<sup>2</sup>Among the 658 SROs and SRO supervisors polled in the 2002 National Association of School Resource Officer (NASRO) School Resource Officer Survey, only 19 percent reported receiving additional benefits. See [www.nasro.com](http://www.nasro.com).

Taking their vehicles home benefits SROs in two ways:

- SROs save time by not having to travel to the stationhouse to pick up and return a vehicle at the beginning and end of each day.
- SROs save money by not having to use their personal vehicles to commute to work. One SRO estimated that a take-home car could save an officer between \$3,000-\$5,000 a year on gas, repairs, and liability insurance.

- (2) **Extra pay.** A number of programs provide a salary stipend for SROs. In Sarasota County and Schaumburg the officers receive an automatic \$1,300 and \$1,600 bonus, respectively, because they become detectives. Four other programs offer a bonus of five percent of the SRO's base pay.

Other programs have made use of still other incentives.

- A consultant hired by one SRO program suggested that providing the SROs with mountain bikes would attract officers to the position. As a result, the program bought several bikes and then sent one SRO for training in how to use them so he could in turn train the other SROs in their proper use.
- In Tennessee, Captain Nathan Johns, the Maury County program supervisor, emphasizes the "team" element of the SRO program to potential candidates. Many of the current SROs have been with the program since it began in 1998, which has helped create a bond within the group. The department deliberately fosters this esprit de corps by sending all the SROs each year to the annual Tennessee School Resource Officers conference and by hosting required weekly meetings for all SROs, supervisors, and the sheriff.

Some programs provide a package of incentives. The Sarasota County Sheriff's Office offers candidates:

- a stepping stone to promotion in the department since the program is one of its most prized assignments (the current sheriff was the agency's second SRO);
- detective status;
- \$1,300 extra in detective pay;
- an unmarked take-home cruiser;
- increased opportunities for paid overtime; and
- opportunities for extra training.

When programs do not have enough applicants, it makes sense to offer incentives to avoid the alternative of assigning officers to be SROs involuntarily. The Tucson Police Department's program found that introducing two common incentives was effective in increasing its applicant pool (see the box "Tucson's Incentives Resulted in More Applicants").

### **Tucson's Incentives Resulted in More Applicants**

Several years ago, very few officers were applying to be SROs in the Tucson Police Department—first established in 1962—because of the stigma associated with being a "Kiddie Cop" and the need to learn "nonpolice" information (e.g., child development) and new skills (especially, teaching). When the rest of the department went to four 10-hour days, it became even more difficult to recruit SROs, who had to work five days a week. As a result, the department instituted two incentives:

- providing a five percent increase in SRO base pay; and
- giving SROs take-home cruisers.

At the same time, the department extended its four 10-hours-a-day week for patrol officers to SROs, giving them either every Monday or Friday off—a long weekend.

According to supervisor Sergeant Steve Belda, "All three are [effective] incentives. I have heard it said that 'If it were not for the benefits—golden handcuffs—I'd leave this unit.' They have a lot to do with getting officers interested. The take-homes save them money having to maintain and buy gas for their personal cars. SROs also receive a five percent salary increase when coming into the SRO Unit."

## Neutralizing Disincentives

Many officers are discouraged from applying to become SROs because they feel the position has disadvantages. Agencies can try to increase the number of applicants by ***eliminating or softening what officers feel are disincentives to becoming SROs***. The discussion below identifies the most commonly perceived disincentives and methods of counteracting them.

**Teaching.** Many officers ***feel anxious—even terrified—about teaching in front of a class***. As a result, according to Detective John Jameson, a former SRO in Schaumburg, "Having to manage a classroom scares people from applying." Jim Marshall agreed: "Some cops are afraid to teach—that's a big part of the problem [of officers not wanting to be SROs]."

- **Neutralize:** Tell officers they will be trained to teach before they go into the schools, or shortly afterwards. Have an experienced SRO explain how he or she was nervous initially about teaching but came to be good at it and enjoy it.

**"Kiddie Cop" image.** Some officers are concerned that other officers—or they themselves—see SROs as a not doing "real" police work.

- **Neutralize:** Three departments have taken steps to eliminate the "babysitter" myth.
  - Captain Curtis Main of the Boone Police Department tells officers about the number of felony arrests SROs make. In addition, as noted above, Main arranged for every new recruit to the department to shadow the SRO in the high school to see how much real police work they do.
  - The Lakewood Police Department periodically distributes a bulletin (see chapter 4, "Minimizing Turnover") designed in part to educate patrol officers to the serious crimes SROs address in the schools.
  - A police department in Kentucky reassigns its SROs to regular patrol during the summer to help prevent other officers from misperceiving the SROs as "not real cops."

---

**Lack of mobility.** While SROs have more independence than most patrol officers and considerable flexibility in how they schedule their day, ***the job can be confining***. According to Captain Curtis Main, "Some officers get claustrophobic focusing only on a school building and parking lot."

- **Neutralize.** Explain that many SROs end up leaving campus several times during the week to transport kids to the juvenile detention center, attend court, back up another SRO in an emergency, visit homes where there is a truancy problem, or travel to their feeder schools. Point out that, while confined to the campus, SROs experience a tremendous amount of varied stimulation, including counseling kids, coordinating with administrators, handling parents, breaking up fights, investigating crimes, making arrests, and participating in volunteer endeavors such as coaching.

**Hard work.** Sergeant Dennis Bogdan, a program supervisor in West Orange, says that the hard work involved—the demands and expectations of the job—can be a disincentive. For example, "You can't just tell war stories in class; you need meaningful instruction with an organized lesson plan." Lieutenant Greg Harrison of the Lenoir County Sheriff's Office in North Carolina warns candidates that "working in the schools is hard work—you're not sitting in a car for eight hours like in patrol."

- **Neutralize:** Agree that SROs work very hard, but point out how stimulating, varied, and challenging the work is dealing with all kinds of people in all kinds of situations, resulting in satisfaction in doing a good job on so many fronts. Explain how supervisors will be flexible about providing time off. For example, if SROs in Sarasota County need to take care of a sick child, Captain Tim Carney, who supervises program, lets them go home.

**Working after hours.** According to Captain Curtis Main, some officers are discouraged from applying "because the extracurricular activities [SROs must participate in, such as athletic events, dances] make the days long." Captain Nathan Johns in Maury County said, "Particularly if they have children, the SROs' schedule can be a disincentive because the extracurricular activities make the schedule during the school year very hectic and prevent SROs from attending their own families' events."

- **Neutralize.** Find ways of compensating SROs for their long hours.
  - To allow some flexibility in SRO schedules, Maury County assigns each SRO a back-up SRO to cover events and activities that conflict with important personal commitments.
  - Captain Curtis Main counters the long days by allowing officers to build up compensatory time and then, combined with their regular vacation, take off July and half of August. The chief agreed to the policy as long as the SROs would come into the department periodically to check for messages.

**Isolation from the department.** Some potential candidates anticipate—or have been told—that, as SROs, they may get disconnected from the rest of the agency and ***miss the squad camaraderie and knowing what is going on in the department.***

- **Neutralize:** While SROs who go back to being beat officers during the summer can renew their contacts with other officers, programs have found other ways to reduce SROs' feelings of isolation.

—As noted above, Captain Johns in Maury County emphasizes the "team" element of the SRO program to potential candidates, pointing out that the unit has developed an internal esprit de corps—including weekly meetings with the sheriff—that helps reduce their sense of separation from the rest of the department.

—Program supervisors in the Chula Vista Police Department require SROs to go to the day shift patrol roll call every Wednesday morning. In addition, SROs supplement patrol on critical calls and are encouraged to work patrol shifts on overtime when there are shortages on patrol.

—Jim Marshall reported that "I decided to come to the office at the beginning and end of every day" to stay in touch with other officers. SRO Kiel Higgins in Albuquerque, New Mexico, works off-duty with patrol officers every Friday and Saturday from 9:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m. to target parties. A few SROs stay with—or join—the SWAT team to keep in touch with other officers.

—The Lakewood Police Department's in-house SRO program bulletin has prompted discussions between the SROs and other department officers about at-risk youth and trends in student misconduct.

**Dead-end position.** Some SROs feel the position will stall their careers because it involves working with kids and is isolating. In some departments, this may be the case.

- **Neutralize:** Make sure department administrators realize why the program should be considered a plus for SROs seeking promotion—for example, as one police chief said, "More than being a representative of the chief during a traffic stop, these officers *really* make an impact on the chief's or sheriff's tenure." High ranking administrators should make clear that the position is a valued assignment in the department by bringing it up as a qualification when SROs apply for promotions (the grapevine will take care of making sure other officers find this out).

### Some Disincentives Are Unique to Specific Departments

Programs need to find out whether features ***of their particular law enforcement agency*** discourage officers from applying to become SROs and then eliminate these features.

- As every police officer and sheriff's deputy knows, in some departments there are units run by commanders whom no one gets along with. When one police department had to appoint officers to become SROs because no one applied, it discovered that the program supervisors had a reputation for being difficult to work for. When the department replaced the supervisors, the unit became known as a good place to work and received more than enough applicants for each SRO position.
- In Fontana, because SROs must investigate allegations of sexual abuse and molestation that occur in schools, some officers who anticipate being uncomfortable handling these cases will not apply for openings in the program. One response is to explain to potential applicants how infrequently these cases may occur.

In summary, programs can address disincentives in three ways.

- (1) When the disincentive reflects a misconception, ***spread the truth about the program***. As noted above, the Lakewood Police Department distributes a bulletin describing some of the dicey and interesting arrests SROs make in order to dispel the myth that the officers are "Kiddie Cops."
- (2) When the disincentive is real but modifiable, ***change it***. For example, the Tucson Police Department extended patrol officers' 4-10s schedule to the SROs.
- (3) When the disincentive is indisputable and unalterable, ***offset the drawbacks to the position by offering incentives and by publicizing the position's numerous significant attractions***.

Once the program has recruited candidates, it then has to carefully screen them to ensure that only highly qualified officers are assigned as SROs—the subject of the following chapter.



## Appendix

### Sioux Falls Police Department SRO Position Announcement



## Police Department Interoffice M E M O R A N D U M

**Date:** 2/7/2002  
**To:** All Shifts  
**From:** Sgt. Lyon  
**Subject:** Information about SRO Position

We are still taking applications for the 2 Middle School SRO positions. These positions will be available in Fall 2003. Training for these positions will be offered this summer. One of the training commitments is the COPS grant training. The COPS training seminars are being held in 4 different locations., Phoenix AZ, Pittsburgh, PA, Salt Lake City, UT , and New Orleans, LA. Whoever is selected as an SRO will need to attend one of these 3 day schools. This is completely funded by the federal government. People who attended this training have told me it is one of the best schools they have attended.

Training opportunities are only one of the positive aspects of becoming an SRO. SRO's work daytime hours, with some flexibility depending upon the needs of the school and the officer assigned. SRO's during the school year have weekends and holidays off. For the summer of 2003, SRO's were allowed to bid the shift they wanted to work. All SRO's are assigned to the shift they wanted to work for the summer. They are assigned days off by their seniority on the shift. This is a different practice than in past years and hopefully will become permanent.

SRO's are busy and working in an environment where they are welcomed and held in high esteem. SRO's work independently throughout the day and have the ability to do pro-active police work instead of just reactive, call-driven police work. SRO's are assigned cases and have the opportunity to investigate and follow through with a case in the same way a detective does.